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# Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
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R 261130Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3797
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 11770

FROM AMBASSADOR MCHENRY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS AO SF
SUBJECT: ANGOLA TALKS: SOUTH AFRICAN PRISONERS

1. IN THE COURSE OF OUR DISCUSSION THE SECOND DAY ON THE STATUS OF AMERICAN MERCENARIES IMPRISONED IN ANGOLA, I INFORMED THE PRIME MINISTER THAT THE SOUTH AFRICANS HAD EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE WELL-BEING OF THE EIGHT OR SO SOUTH AFRICANS CAPTURED IN THE 1975 CONFLICT. I EXPRESSED MY HOPE THAT THE PRISONERS WERE IN GOOD HEALTH AND WELL CARED FOR. THE PRIME MINISTERS RESPONSE WAS INDIRECT. HE SAID THAT THE ANGOLANS HAD HELD DISCUSSIONS IN GENEVA WITH THE SOUTH AFRICANS BUT THAT THE SOUTH AFRICANS HAD BROKEN OFF THE TALKS. ANGOLA WAS WILLING TO RESUME THE TALKS AND HAD NO INTEREST IN DEVOTING ITS SCARCE RESOURCES TO THE CARE OF EXPATRIATES.

2. I ASKED HOW MANY CUBANS AND ANGOLANS WERE HELD BY SOUTH AFRICA. THE PRIME MINISTER REPLIED THAT SOUTH AFRICA HELD THREE CUBANS. THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRACTICE WAS TO KILL ANGOLANS AND TO TAKE NO ANGOLAN PRISONERS.

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3. AFTER READING THE AGREED REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE FIVE WITH FOURIE, IT SEEMED PRUDENT TO RAISE THE WELL-BEING AGAIN WITH THE PM. THE MESSAGE FROM THE FIVE WENT FURTHER THAN WASHINGTON'S INITIAL INQUIRY ABOUT THE "SHOOTING" OF ONE SOUTH AFRICAN AND SAID THAT THE INDIVIDUAL WAS "SHOT IN COLD BLOOD". THE OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE THE ISSUE CAME DURING MY FAREWELL CALL ON THE PIME MINISTER.

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THIS TIME I REFERRED TO A REPORT THAT ON OF THE SOUTH AFRICANS HAD BEEN KILLED. I AGAIN EXPRESSED CONCERN AND STATED THAT IF IT WOULD BE USEFUL WE WOULD ASSIST IN THE RETURN OF THE SOUTH AFRICANS AND OF THE CUBANS. THE PRIME MINISTER REPLIED, "FORTUNATELY, NONE OF THE SOUTH AFRICANS IS DEAD." HE DID NOT TAKE UP THE OFFER OF ASSISTANCE AND HIS TONE AND WORING WERE SUCH THAT I SURMISE THAT THERE WAS REGRETTABLE INCIDENT OF SOME SORT AND THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WAS RELIVED THAT NO LIFE HAD BEEN LOST. GARDNER

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# Message Attributes

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**Control Number:** n/a
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**Decaption Note:**
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014
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